

INTERESTING SCOTTISH LEPIDOPTERA
IN 1985

By K. P. BLAND*

The following interesting species of Lepidoptera have been encountered by the author in Scotland during 1985.

Nematopogon metaxella (Hübner, 1810-13). On 22.vi.1984 Mr. J. M. Nelson took a single specimen of a *Nematopogon* which he subsequently passed to me for checking. It proved to be *Nematopogon metaxella*, a species previously only recorded in Scotland from Berwickshire (Bolam, 1932), and Sutherland (Buxton, 1854). The latter record has always been considered suspect as none of Buxton's Sutherland specimens have survived. Mr. Nelson's specimen had been taken in Milton of Drimmie Wood NNR, near Blairgowrie, Perthshire (O.S. Grid NO/1650; VC. 89) and so considerably extends the confirmed northwards distribution of this species. A visit to the wood (by KPB) on 23.vi.1985 confirmed the presence of a breeding colony of the species as a further 4 specimens were seen in flight amongst the alders.

Caloptilia cuculipennella (Hübner, 1796). This species was first noted as Scottish in 1878 when Sir Thomas Moncreiffe recorded it from Moncreiffe Hill, Perthshire. Subsequently Mr. E. C. Pelham-Clinton took it at Crichton, Midlothian (O.S. Grid NT/3762) on 4.vi.1973. On 2.iv.1985, while collecting at Arniston Engine, Midlothian (O.S. Grid NT/3361; VC. 83) I beat 4 hibernating imagines of *C. cuculipennella* from overhanging *Luzula sylvatica* by the riverside. A further specimen was obtained in the same way in the same locality on 14.xii.1985. It is gratifying to be able to report its continued presence in this area.

Acrolepiopsis betulella (Curtis, 1838). One week-end at the beginning of March I was looking through some old records in the literature when I came across the following:

"An insect new to the Edinburghshire list was taken at Roslin, on the 22nd (May 1851), flying by the bank of the river: it is the *Roeslerstammia pygmaeana* of Haworth and Stephens." (Logan, 1852).

This is still the only record of *Acrolepia pygmaeana* (Haworth) from Scotland. I resolved that come June I would look for the leaf-mines of this species in *Solanum dulcamara* in Roslin Glen LNR, Midlothian (O.S. Grid NT/2762: VC.83) to confirm that the species still occurred there. On reflection I decided not to wait until June but to go out immediately and beat for hibernating imagines. In the course of the afternoon, much to my surprise, beating overhanging dead *Luzula sylvatica* on steep banks produced two rather worn

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examples of what I immediately took to be *A. pygmaeana*. They were mounted and set aside. In early September their turn came to have their identities checked. I was rather surprised when, in two different keys, they would not come out to *pygmaeana* but always ran to *betulella*. A check of the genitalia confirmed that they were, in fact, *Acrolepiopsis betulella*, the species recently rediscovered, after 90 years in hiding, by Dr. Mark Young in Wester Ross (Young, 1985). Dr. Young and others have now reared *A. betulella* from larvae feeding in the flower-heads of Wild Garlic, *Allium ursinum* Linn. (Kyrki & Agassiz, 1985; Young, 1985). The Roslin specimens are of interest, not only because they are less distantly removed from its last century stronghold of Castle Eden Dene than those from Wester Ross, but because they demonstrate that *A. betulella* also hibernates over winter as an imago in this country.

The question arises, of course, as to whether Logan's account of the capture of *R. pygmaeana* in 1851 does not in fact refer to a misidentified *A. betulella*. Two September afternoons spent searching for the food-plant of *A. pygmaeana* in the vicinity of the 1985 captures were without success although Wild Garlic was common nearby. *Solanum dulcamara* is a rather uncommon plant around Edinburgh and, when it does occur, it seems to be associated with recently disturbed ground.

Mompha miscella (D. & S., 1775). Three larvae, mining the leaves of *Helianthemum chamaecistus*, collected on 18.v.1985 in Fealar Gorge, Perthshire (O.S.Grid NN/9979; VC. 89), part of the Beinn A'Ghlo SSSI, yielded two chalcid parasites and a single imago of *Mompha miscella* (D. & S.) on 4.vii. and 8.vii.1985 respectively. The only previously published record of this species from Scotland is from Aberdour, Fife (Evans, 1905) thus the present record considerably extends its known range in the north.

Acleris logiana (Clerck, 1759). On 17.iii.1985 a single specimen of *Acleris logiana* (Clerck) was beaten from a leaf-congested tangle of Honeysuckle in Petersmuir Wood, East Lothian (O.S. Grid NT/4866; VC.82). This finding substantiates the occurrence of this species in Southern Scotland (Balfour, 1930).

Parapoynx stratiotata (Linnaeus, 1758). A specimen of this southern species was reared from a larval case containing a pupa, attached to the underside of a floating leaf of a Water Lily. The pupa was collected on 6.vii.1985 at the Black Lochs SSSI, Argyllshire (O. S. Grid NM/9231; VC. 98) while on a field trip with the Glasgow Natural History Society. It emerged, during my absence on holiday, between 13-25.vii.1985, and when discovered at the latter date was already dead. There appears to be no previously published records of this species north of the Border.

Euchoeca nebulata (Scopoli, 1763). This species is very local in Scotland, previously being known only from the Loch Lomond area (Christie & Christie, 1982). It is nice to be able to report that it is not restricted to that area (i.e. VC. 86 & 99) but also occurs in Strathardle. On the dull sultry afternoon of 23.vi.1985 it was abundant, flying in company of *Hydrelia flammeolaria* (Hufn.) and *Asthena albulata* (Hufn.), in the alder carr in Milton of Drimmie Wood NNR, Perthshire (O.S.Grid N0/1650; VC.89). It is probably more widespread in Scotland than these few records suggest, but has been overlooked, like *H. flammeolaria* and *A. albulata*, due to their diurnal habits.

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